



80 YEARS
IN NORTHERN SKIES





100 years of aviation history

People have always dreamt of flying. The Wright brothers were the first to make that dream come true 100 years ago. Their first flight lasted just 12 seconds and went 40 metres.

Finnair has been making its own dream of flying come true for 80 years. The world's fifth-oldest airline, then named Aero, was founded in 1923, taking off at a time when travel - especially international travel - was extraordinary.

From skis to sky

Aero made its first flight in 1924 from Helsinki to Tallinn. Its home base was the harbour of Helsinki, where the Junkers F13 aircraft took off and landed on water - equipped in winter with skis and in summer with floats.

In December 1936 the planes finally got to take off from the ground. At the beginning they flew only on international routes. By the end of the 1930s there were daily flights to almost all European capitals - though the

flight to Paris, for example, took 11 hours. As more airports were built in Finland, Aero also started to build up its domestic flight network.

When Helsinki was selected for the 1940 Olympics, international air traffic was expected to increase dramatically. But war intervened, the Olympics were cancelled and plans were changed.

To a new era

After the second world war, Aero entered a new era. It chose a new aircraft, the DC-3, which was the most advanced passenger aircraft of that time. Also new was



the name on the fuselage: "Finnish Air Lines". In 1947 air hostesses came on board for the flights. Despite the post-war shortages, they served soup and tea out of thermoses to passengers.

The Olympics, which had been cancelled by the war, were finally held in Helsinki in 1952. Air traffic increased, the number of passengers grew, and the new Helsinki airport was opened at Seutula, just outside the city.



From propellers to the jet age

In the wake of the Olympics, Finnair acquired 44-seat Convair aircraft, which had a pressurised cabin, among other luxuries. In 1953 Aero began using the name Finnair in its marketing, and the name became official in 1968.

At the beginning of the 1960s the popularity of air travel soared to new heights thanks to the introduction of jet aircraft. The new Caravelles transported passengers at 800 kilometres an hour. Flights were shorter and the noise level was reduced. Finnair was the first

European airline to fly charter passengers in jet aircraft.

Then came the DC aircraft, the eights and nines, and in 1975 the tens, the first wide-body planes. Finnair's latest choice



for European traffic is the Airbus 320 family. By the end of 2002 there were already 24 Airbus planes in the fleet.